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Sikkema: 'Show me the money'

Senate majority leader calls for a reality check on Capitol Avenue

LANSING – The governor's choice to increase spending in the budget while Michigan's economic recovery is lagging can only lead to the higher deficits of yesteryear – and Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema said today he is not going there.

"The administration knows revenues are down. They know it before the Legislature does. It's time for a reality check on Capitol Avenue," said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "We just got done eliminating the deficits from the previous administration. The worst thing we can do is let this administration start us down that same road to ruin."

Preliminary reports indicate that October revenue collections were weak due to a drop in sales, use and single-business tax collections. An early estimate by the nonpartisan Senate Fiscal Agency suggests that General Fund and School Aid Fund revenues could be short a combined \$140 million.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, total nonfarm employment increased during the year through September in 47 states and the District of Columbia. Meanwhile, Michigan has led the nation in job loss throughout 2004.

"Across the nation, states are starting to feel an economic recovery, but in Michigan we are still losing jobs," said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "The Legislature remains focused on job retention and creation. But it will take time for the economy to turn around. The governor says not to worry, that Michigan can afford spending increases. I say, show me the money."

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